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Self-esteem assessment form development study

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Abstract

Self-esteem is a general personality trait that affects the whole life of an individual. Research findings show that people with a high level of self-esteem are more successful both in academic and daily life as compared to people with lower self-esteem. The purpose of this research is to develop a valid and reliable assessment form to measure self-esteem. The sample group of the study consists of 278 people studying in various universities. The form consists of 19 items remaining after the elimination of those with an item-test correlation value below 0.30. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the self-esteem assessment form has been computed to be 0.81.

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1. Introduction

Self-esteem, defined as “an individual's judgement of their own value” (Bandura, 1997), is a general personality trait and not a temporary attitude nor an attitude particular to individual situations (Pervin & John, 2001). An individual's level of self-esteem affects their whole life, and therefore their school life, either positively or negatively. Shrauger reports that people with lower self-esteem fail significantly more frequently than those with higher self-esteem (Shrauger, 1972; Franken, 1988).

According to the findings of a research conducted by Rogers, children with higher self-esteem are found to be much more assertive, independent and creative as compared to children with lower self-esteem. People with high self-esteem also tend to accept the social definitions of facts less readily, unless these definitions are in accordance with their own observations, more flexible and capable of producing more original solutions to problems (Pervin & John, 2001).

Low self-esteem is like a person's defeating themselves and affects one's life circularly. Negative thoughts give rise to negative attitudes, negative attitudes cause negative behaviour, negative behaviour nurtures negative feelings and thus all parts affect and are affected by self-esteem (Branden, 1969; Napoli, et. al., 1992). This can be schematically illustrated as follows:

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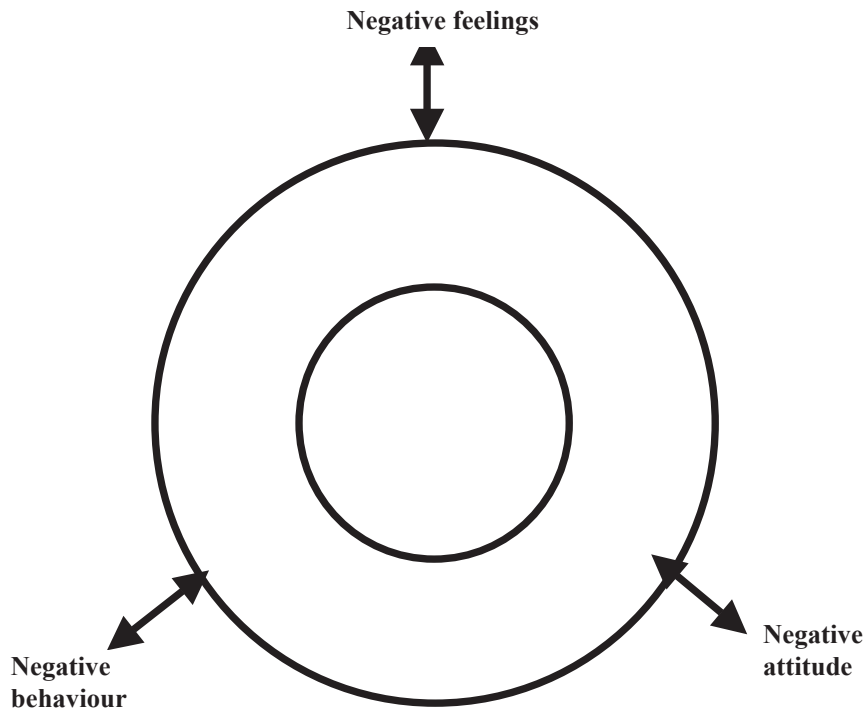


Figure 1. Interaction Between Low Self-esteem and Negative Behaviour

The main irrational belief factors that indicate low self-esteem, as brought out by Daly and Burton in a study on people with low self-esteem are stated below:

1. An exigency to be approved, an obsessive desire to be accepted,
2. A high expectation of ego, a problem of prescribing standards which are too stringent and impossible to meet,
3. Anxiety, intensive and useless worrying tendency,
4. Avoiding problems, self undermining tendency to avoid facing and dealing with stress (Bednar et al., 1989).

According to Napoli et al., high self-esteem traits are the following:

- The individual is open to take the opportunity to participate in developing experiences in spite of the risk of making mistakes,
- He/she takes part in an activity (sports, learning a new skill etc.) just for the pleasure of doing it without feeling the need to prove anything,
- He/she takes the responsibility of his/her actions without blaming anyone or finding pretexts,
- He/she accepts his own and other's strengths and accomplishments,
- He/she accepts the personal power of someone without trying to abuse or control them,
- He/she focuses on the quality rather than the quantity of life experiences (e.g. friendship),
- He/she enjoys team work and appreciates its value in getting a job done or improving interpersonal relations,
- He/she finds a balance in life (e.g. work, entertainment, solitude).

On the other hand, low self-esteem traits are the following: Deficiency in accepting constructive criticism and making use of it for one's development,

- Deficiency in taking decisions and realising creative values, need to obey firmly set rules,
- Deficiency in taking the risks that may give way to mistakes,
- Deficiency in changing, a fixation on the same food, environment, course of action etc.,
- Deficiency in focusing on others' power,
- Deficiency in focusing on one's own power,

- Tendency to live others' accomplishments vicariously (idolating heroes),
- Tendency to attach a lot of importance to outward appearance (like dating the most attractive person on the campus, driving the hottest car, etc.),
- Tendency to be compulsive about cleanliness, eating, orderliness and the like,
- Tendency to be overly competitive (to be in need of winning every time and surpassing everyone in order to feel important),
- Tendency to be a poor loser and to see this position as an approval of their personal value,
- Tendency to be overly critical (finding faults),
- Tendency to overwork to prove themselves and to show others their worth (Napoli et al., 1992).

It is important for the society to nurture creative and successful individuals who are not afraid of facing problems and dealing with them. According to Cooley (1982), self-esteem is affected not only by an individual's own judgement about themselves but also by others' judgement about them (Sternberg & Williams, 2002). At this point, every person – parents, supervisors, friends – can be said to have an effect on the individual. When we consider the education environment, we can state that the professor can help the students to reach a high level of self-esteem through the ambience he/she forms in class and his/her course of conduct. The determination of the level of self-esteem of the students may help prepare a healthier learning environment. The assessment of the level of self-esteem necessitates the utilisation of scales specific to this field. The purpose of this study is to develop a valid and reliable self-esteem assessment form.

2. Method

At the stage of forming the items in the Self-Esteem Assessment Form, the scales developed abroad on the subject have been resorted to (Perera, 1999; Olesch, 1995; Napoli et al., 1992; Rosenberg, 1965). The trial form consisting of 36 items has been administered to 278 people studying in Buca Faculty of Education of Dokuz Eylul University and the Faculty of Education of Uludag University.

3. Results

After the application, the item-test correlation coefficients have been computed to determine the differentiating capability of the items and those with a correlation coefficient below 0.30 have been eliminated. Following the factor analysis conducted in order to assess structural validity, two more items have been eliminated to obtain a scale of a single factor. All 19 items of which the final form consists gather under a unique factor. The item-test correlation coefficients of the items in the Self-esteem Assessment Form are presented in Table 1.

Table1- Item-Test Correlation Results of the Items in the Assessment Form

Item Number	Item-Test Correlation Coefficient	Item Number	Item-Test Correlation Coefficient
1	0.39	11	0.36
2	0.30	12	0.42
3	0.47	13	0.39
4	0.46	14	0.40
5	0.39	15	0.37
6	0.49	16	0.33
7	0.44	17	0.43
8	0.43	18	0.39
9	0.37	19	0.32
10	0.31		

The first factor loadings of the items in the Self-esteem Assessment Form are presented in Table 2.

Table-2. The First Factor Loadings of the Items in the Self-esteem Assessment Form

Item Number	Factor Loading	Item Number	Factor Loading
1	0.48	11	0.44
2	0.35	12	0.49
3	0.56	13	0.51
4	0.56	14	0.49
5	0.50	15	0.48
6	0.60	16	0.41
7	0.54	17	0.51
8	0.54	18	0.46
9	0.45	19	0.39
10	0.38		

The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the test consisting of 19 items is computed to be 0.81.

4. Conclusions and recommendation

This research is aimed at developing a Self-Esteem Assessment Form. For this purpose, the trial form consisting of 36 items has been administered to 278 people studying in various universities. Following statistical analyses, a final scale has been formed consisting of the 19 items with item-test coefficient above 0.30, and the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of this single factor scale has been computed to be 0.81. Based on these results, the Self-Esteem Assessment Form can be said to be a valid and reliable scale. The Self-esteem Assessment Form is expected to be helpful to the researchers conducting studies in this field.

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